



Did U Know?

Leander Paes of India was the first Asian ATP singles title winner.



BTV & SET Max

ICC Champions Trophy
India vs South Africa
First Semifinal
Live from 2:30 pm

ESPN

England vs India
8th ODI, NatWest Trophy
Highlights at 8:30 am
Football Focus
Football Magazine
Repeat at 11:00 am
Bayer Leverkusen vs Man United
UEFA Champions League
Repeat at 6:00 pm
Sportscenter Hindi
Sports News
Live at 8:30 pm
Barcelona vs Galatasaray
UEFA Champions League
Repeat at 9:30 pm
Arsenal vs PSV Eindhoven
UEFA Champions League
Live at 12:30 am (Thursday)
Ajax Amsterdam vs Inter Milan
UEFA Champions League
Same day delayed 3:00 am

STAR Sports

Asia Sport Show
International Sports News
8:30 am
Aston Villa vs Everton
English Premiership
Taped version at 12:30 pm
Sportsline Tonight
Sports News
Live at 8:00 pm



Nasser Hussain

(England cricket captain)
"We've played against India a lot and have studied their game carefully. We know what areas they do most of their hitting and have thought of a few ways to restrict that. It just didn't work today though. The first eight overs they bowled were very difficult for our batsmen and again when they batted their first fifteen overs they were very good."

On their ICC Champions Trophy

Domestically unwell



SPORTS REPORTER

With October knocking at the door, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is yet to determine when the new domestic season will start.

According to the Board's calendar of events, the 2002-03 season is scheduled to begin with a three-day tournament involving the top six Premier Division clubs from Dhaka. But as yet no headway has been made to launch the tournament, which is the first of its kind, on October 1.

It was a good idea to involve the financially well off Dhaka clubs in the longer-version games side-by-side with existing one-day competitions.

But with only a week to go before the event kicks off, it appears the competition will not be starting on time.

None of the big six clubs -- Victoria Sporting Club, Abahani Krira Chakra, Mohammedan Sporting Club, Kalabagan Krira Chakra, Bangladesh Biman and Brothers Union -- have received any official letter regarding the tournament.

"We have not received any word from the Board when the domestic season will begin. We are also very concerned because the delay is hampering our preparations for the coming season," said Victoria president Shafiqur Rahman Munna yesterday.

The other club officials even feared whether the whole domestic season would be affected because of the stagnant state of the Board. The BCB is in limbo for the last few months since a High Court ruling suspended Board of Directors

and empowered president Ali Asghar to run it single-handedly.

"I am not at all optimistic about the proposed three-day tournament. It was included in the domestic itinerary hastily. We should be more concerned about finishing the regular events according to the schedule," said Surjo Tarun official Tanjeeb Ahsan, adding that last year the domestic calendar ran until the middle of May.

Mohammedan's general secretary Lokman Hossain was not aware of such an event taking place in the first week of October.

Bangladesh Biman's Ali Ahsan Babu, Kalabagan general secretary Alam Chowdhury and Abahani official Jalal Younis expressed the same view.

While all of the participating teams indicated they had not been properly informed, the BCB's deputy director of development Shafiqul Haque said that he was working on the details of the new tournament.

"I have already asked Abid to contact the six clubs and discuss how to start the three-day tournament," said Haque.

The only spokesman actively involved in the Board activities after Asghar, said ground staff are working to prepare the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium and rehabilitation of the all-purpose Bangabandhu National Stadium will start tomorrow straight after the football leagues end.

This sad episode suggests that the domestic cricket including the National League faces unwanted delay. Perhaps it means at least another month before the season commences.

Definitely it is another glaring example of how ignorant our Board officials are now.



AN ARENA FOR ALL! Aspiring cricketers (L) and footballers play side-by-side at the under construction stadium in Dhaka's Kamalapur yesterday afternoon.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Minhaz awaits recall



UNB, Dhaka

Former national skipper Minhazul Abedin is likely to be recalled for the forthcoming home series against the West Indies.

Following the frustrating performance of the national team in the ICC Champions Trophy the Bangladesh Cricket Board may rethink about team selection and go for shuffling in every match.

"We will not only experiment with young and promising players but also utilise the experiences of senior players," said BCB president Ali Asghar yesterday.

The BCB boss will soon talk to



MINHAZUL ABEDIN

selectors for discussing the new strategy ahead of the series against the West Indies beginning in the last

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Indo batters SA's worry



REUTERS, Colombo

India's in-form batsmen face a stern pace test as they aim for a repeat semifinal victory over South Africa in the ICC Champions Trophy Wednesday.

India beat South Africa by 95 runs in the last four in Nairobi two years ago to finish runners-up and will once again look to their batsmen, opener Virender Sehwag in particular, for inspiration.

The explosive Sehwag slammed 126 against England on Sunday, bringing the 12-team event alive with his clean hitting during an eight-wicket win.

South African skipper Shaun Pollock said the depth of the Indian batting would be a huge challenge.

"He batted superbly well against England," the fast bowler said. "We got to make sure we bowl well and I believe we have got the personnel."

India take on the 1998 winners confident of having shed their tag of poor chasers by twice achieving challenging targets against England.

Pollock said the match would be a clash between two confident sides but felt his eleven had the ability to go all the way.

"It should be a great game at the business end of the tournament," he said.

With flat pitches offering little help to the bowlers, India seem to hold an edge in the day-night clash at the Premadasa Stadium.

South Africa also have injury worries, with all-rounder Nicky Boje and fast bowler Alan Dawson having only a "50-50" chance of playing, coach Eric Simons said.

Boje is nursing a hairline finger fracture while Dawson is struggling with a calf injury.

Fast bowler Steve Elworthy and uncapped all-rounder Robin Peterson, who have arrived as cover, besides batsman Justin Ontong, who bowls spin, are in the reckoning.

Both teams will be keen to take first strike as the pitches are increasingly showing signs of slowing.

India's concerns centre on their poor bowling in the later stages of the innings during both their league wins, with both spinners Anil Kumble and Harbhajan Singh subdued.

"We just have to bowl better. We have done it before," Ganguly said, voicing his concern after Zimbabwe recovered from 14 for two and England from seven for two during their league meetings.

South Africa coach Eric Simons said: "We watched their game against England with a lot of inter-

est. There are areas we have to explore, their bowling and our batting.

"We are a good all-round side, the balance of our side is a bit better."

South Africa have eased into the last four after starting with a last-ball victory over West Indies chasing 239.

Opens Herschelle Gibbs (116) and left-hander Graeme Smith (69) then revealed their form in a 159-run stand which saw South Africa thrash Kenya by 176 runs to top their pool.

Their only batting concern is the diminishing effectiveness of Lance Klusener, but Pollock said the all-rounder was still capable of late surges to turn games around.

TEAMS

INDIA (from): Saurav Ganguly (captain), Virender Sehwag, Vangipurappu Laxman, Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Yuvraj Singh, Mohammad Kaif, Anil Kumble, Harbhajan Singh, Zaheer Khan, Ashish Nehra.

SOUTH AFRICA (from): Herschelle Gibbs, Graeme Smith, Jacques Kallis, Jonty Rhodes, Boeta Dippenaar, Lance Klusener, Mark Boucher, Shaun Pollock (captain), Allan Donald, Justin Ontong, Steve Elworthy, Nicky Boje, Alan Dawson.

Umpires: David Shepherd (England) and Russel Tiffin (Zimbabwe).

U-17 cricketers' second victory

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Under-17 team won their second practice match in Sri Lanka with a comfortable 59-run win over Kurunegala District under-17 team in Colombo yesterday.

After Ashiqur Rahman won the toss, the tourists batted first and made a fighting total of 217 in the stipulated 45 overs. The Under-17 skipper led the way with 53.

Opener Nayeem (47) and middle-order batsman Arafat (35) were the other notable scorers.

In reply, Kurunegala were bundled out for 158 in 37 overs. Bangladesh under-17 team are scheduled to take part in a tri-nation one-day and three-day tournament along with India and Sri Lanka in the island from October 1.

Rangamati football

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati:

Agami Sangha got off to a winning start in the Rangamati Junior Gold Cup football tournament when they earned a solitary goal victory over Bandukranga Eleven in the opening match at the Rangamati Stadium

Thorpe lets Ashes go



AFP, London

England batsman Graham Thorpe on Tuesday admitted that his decision to pull out of this winter's Ashes tour was the toughest of his career.

Just two weeks after convincing selectors he was ready to undertake the trip to Australia, the 33-year-old dramatically changed his mind citing his inability to concentrate on cricket as he struggled to come to terms with the break-up of his marriage.

"I have informed the selectors that I wish to withdraw from the tour to Australia," Thorpe said in the statement released by his county club Surrey.

"During the six weeks away from the game my personal situation did improve and I felt that I was able to make myself available for the tour."

"Since returning to the game I have found it difficult to consistently concentrate on cricket and I must be totally focused for the tour."

"I therefore feel it is better to be honest with the England cricket team, the management, and myself now, rather than during the Ashes tour."

His tangled private life, as well as

a constant battle against a back injury, has meant that Thorpe has only completed one full touring programme out of the past five.

"It would be wrong for me to go to Australia purely for the financial gain that it would bring me whilst I am



GRAHAM THORPE

finding it difficult to fully focus on the job in hand 100% of the time.

"This has been the hardest decision of my cricket career."

The left-handed batsman had originally assured England's management that the problems in his personal life, which forced him to take a break from cricket this summer, would not prevent him completing the tour.

Thorpe is regarded as England's finest middle order batsman and he has always done well against Australia since he marked his Test debut with an unbeaten century at Nottingham in 1993.

David Graveney, the chairman of selectors, was sympathetic.

"He has been honest and he feels he cannot do what he would want to do in a normal situation," he told BBC Radio.

"I can't imagine what he has gone through in the last six months and obviously the situation might have changed from two weeks ago."

Thorpe retired from cricket in the summer in order to devote more time to his young family following the break-up of his marriage, but returned to county action and then convinced selectors that he was ready to tour.

At the time, Thorpe said he was delighted to have been picked and determined to repay the selectors' faith.

The move to include Thorpe appeared to have been justified when he returned to form with Surrey, making 143 in a county championship match against Hampshire.

The selectors were also acutely aware that Thorpe is one of the few

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PHOTO: AFP

PLOTTING THE PROTEA FALL? Master India batsman Sachin Tendulkar (L) and captain Saurav Ganguly have a discussion during their practice session at Premadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday.

'Opener's slot Sachin's'



REUTERS, New Delhi

Virender Sehwag may be in inspired form at the top of the India batting order with captain Saurav Ganguly at the ICC Champions Trophy, but several former Test players still feel the slot should belong to Sachin Tendulkar.

The 29-year-old Tendulkar has been moved to number four to bring more stability to the one-day batting and the move is bringing dividends, particularly overseas where the team has often under-performed.

"I still feel Sachin is a champion opener and should come at the head of the order," said former Indian captain Ajit Wadekar.

"If he is scoring 100 at number four, he can score 150-160 if he bats at one."

The decision has also not gone down well with millions of Tendulkar fans, who feel he would have a better chance of scoring centuries opening the batting.

"The issue," former England captain Geoffrey Boycott counters, "is not if Tendulkar is breaking

records but if India are winning matches.

"The openers have the luxury to go for their shots because they know the best batsman in the world is still to come in."

Skipper Ganguly, who has also asked batsman Rahul Dravid to keep wicket in one-day games, says the order should have been changed even earlier.

"Our strategy of making Sachin and Rahul bat lower down is working well and the batting looks deep," he said.

"We have already seen the benefit of this over the last two series and these were changes we should have done long ago."

Tendulkar started his new role in the West Indies in May and India duly clinched the one-day series 2-1 with Tendulkar scoring a sparkling 65 in the decider at Trinidad.

The Bombay player, who holds the world record for both one-day runs (11,521) and centuries (33), came up with a cracking 105 not out in a rain-abandoned match against England in July.

India then went on to win the triangular tournament, also involving Sri Lanka, chasing a mammoth

326 for victory in the final against England at Lord's.

The team plays South Africa on Wednesday in the semi-finals of the Champions Trophy in Colombo, after Sehwag and Ganguly both hammered centuries in raising 192 for the first wicket against England on Sunday.

But the Tendulkar nostalgia remains. "I think India have asked Sachin to bat at number four so he can be more comfortable against the swinging ball. When he gets his confidence back, they should move him back up," former Test spinner Maninder Singh has said.

"Sachin has done wonders as an opener with Ganguly. Sehwag could be useful down the order as well."

India have also benefited in the last three months because of youngsters Yuvraj Singh and Mohammad Kaif, who cracked 111 not out for his maiden one-day century against Zimbabwe this month.

Wadekar said: "Yuvraj and Kaif have been playing with a lot of heart. That's great news ahead of the 2003 World Cup."

Ricky angry at SL police



AFP, Colombo

West Indies manager Ricky Skerritt Monday accused Sri Lankan police bodyguards of "high-handed and authoritative" behaviour after a move to crack down on women entering hotel rooms of players.

Skerritt's lawyers, in a letter to a local newspaper which Monday published a report of a police complaint, said that "interested parties" were trying to "sully the good name of our client".

Police had said in a letter to the International Cricket Council (ICC) that three women were found in the rooms of Skerritt and his computer operator, Garfield Smith, in violation of the strict ICC access control rules.

The ICC sought police protection for the Champions Trophy tournament, which started on September 12 and is due to continue until the end of the month, not so much to protect players, but to make sure they don't get up to dirty tricks.

The tight regulations were aimed at preventing bookmakers or their agents coming into contact with the players taking part in the 'Mini-World Cup' tournament.

"Our client, since his arrival in Sri

Lanka, has repeatedly complained to the International Cricket Council's security officials about the behaviour and attitude of certain security personnel, assigned to the team hotel, who have been high handed, authoritative and officious in acting well beyond their scope of duty," Skerritt's law firm said in their letter to the newspaper.



RICKY SKERRITT

"Our client has also had to admonish certain media personnel who were attempting to vilify certain members of the West Indian team and invade their privacy."

They said the report contained "absolute falsehoods and innuendoes made deliberately with the intention of causing damage and embarrassment to our client's good

name and reputation.

"The insinuation that three prostitutes were found in the rooms of our client and his colleague, Garfield Smith is false, mischievous and malicious."

The police report to the ICC gave the names of the three women who were found in the rooms of the two men and said the authorities had begun an investigation to check if the women had a criminal record or were linked to bookies.

Elite police units deployed to guard the teams taking part in the Champions Trophy tournament were having a tough time keeping out prostitutes in addition to crooked players and bookies, the authorities had said on Sunday.

"We are not making a moral judgement but are simply trying to enforce the 'access control' guidelines issued to us by the cricket authorities," a top police official said.

Police said some of the players were leaving their hotel to side-step the tight security at the deluxe Taj Samudra where plain-clothed policemen have been deployed to check on those meeting the cricketers.

The Sunday Leader newspaper said players were seen trying to pick up women at the Taj Samudra and even two women reporters had been propositioned by unnamed players.

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Badda sixth

SPORTS REPORTER

Badda Jagarani Sangsad finished sixth in the National Bank Premier Division Football League with a 4-3 tie-break win over Rahmatganj Muslim Friends Society in the last Relegation League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium last night.

The match was locked 1-1 in the regulation 90 minutes.

Johnny put Badda ahead in the 12th minute while Milan levelled for Rahmatganj in the 50th minute.

With that win, Badda raised their tally to 19 points to end atop the league table.

On the other hand, Rahmatganj, who have already been relegated to the First Division next season along with Farashganj, earned 14 points from 13 matches.

Ganga takes Lara's place

INTERNET, London

West Indies have called up opening batsman Daren Ganga to replace Brian Lara on the forthcoming tour to India.

Lara will miss the trip after contracting hepatitis during the ICC Champions Trophy event in Sri Lanka.

The left-hander was taken ill

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Star WHIZZ KID COMPETITION 180

Tick the correct answers, post to
The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes

Competition closes at 8 pm Sept 27, 2002 and draw shortly afterwards

- Who will lead the Bangladesh U-17 team in the tri-nations series in Sri Lanka?
Nafis Ashraf Ashiqur
- What was the result of the England and India Test series?
2-0 2-1 1-1
- Who won the US Open singles title?
Agassi Hewitt Sampras
- Who became Champions Trophy hockey champs?
Germany Pakistan Netherlands
- Who clinched the Grand Prix chess title?
Reefat Zia Rajib

Name

Class Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (if any)